

Summary of Feedback on the Draft Charter for the Puget Sound Coordinated Ecosystem Monitoring and Assessment Program and Draft Recommendations for Topical Work Groups

The table below provides a synthesis of the feedback received between December 28 2010 and January 26 2011 on the Draft Charter for the Puget Sound Coordinated Ecosystem Monitoring and Assessment Program and Draft Recommendations for Topical Work Groups developed by the Launch Committee.

We received 23 letters from 22 organizations (listed at the end of this document). Thank you to all who provided comments!

Comments were grouped according to both the key questions outlined in our request for feedback and themes that emerged from the feedback. Partnership staff and the Launch Committee are currently revising the documents according to the feedback. The sources for the feedback are listed at the end of this document.

This synthesis is posted on the Partnership's website, along with the original comment letters at http://www.psp.wa.gov/MP_monitoring_program.php

Generally minor edits or corrections easily addressed:
Numerous individual edits and minor corrections were offered by a number of reviewers
Appendix 1 "tech committee" should be "coordinating committee"
Science Panel endorsed an adaptive mgt approach, not specifically open standards (P2 L19)
Table 1 #6: Sci Panel role is to document monitoring requirements in BSWP. Not sure "advocate" is right
PSP web site lists 10 or 11 members in Science Panel

Significant gaps in Purpose, Goals, Roles & Responsibilities:

Overall program structure is too complex

1. Cumbersome structure
2. Responsibilities, authority, and decision-making within all the different committees and layers needs clarification/definition
3. Proposed structure seems too “top-down” and is too laden with processes and committees
4. Complexity of the proposed structure will be too expensive and unaffordable for many individual organizations to participate. Must balance inclusivity (complexity) with efficiency (streamlining)
5. Clarify which existing coordination efforts are recommended for discontinuation (cannot afford to staff and support all the current existing, and proposed new, groups and committees)
6. Steering committee is unnecessary or may be duplicative with coordinating committee
7. Collapse coordination committee into steering committee
8. Role of coordination vs steering committees is unclear
9. Dispense with both coordination and steering committees
10. Steering Committee needs a strong role and should have broad authority, including oversee/direct PSP’s monitoring program staff. Leadership Council, Science Panel, and ECB roles should be practical and at a high level only
11. Clarify role of monitoring program vs PSP staff
12. Steering Committee should work through the Science Panel (not create another layer within PSP)

Clarify decision making among and between the various committees and participating organizations

1. Explain relationship between Monitoring Program and Lead Entities
2. Also Lead Organizations, Indicator Champions, Interdisciplinary Teams, Local Integrating Orgs
3. Need to tighten-up language describing relationship between monitoring program and the salmon recovery adaptive management and monitoring information work
4. Clarify the role and authority of regulating agencies (eg NOAA; EPA) to require certain monitoring elements
5. There are multiple committees all tasked with the same charge
5. Clarify who makes what decisions, and the process to be used (too many decision-makers?)

6. Clarify role of watershed-based groups
7. Local organizations (agencies, tribes, utilities, special districts, action area local integrating organizations, watershed and WRIA –scale groups) need a stronger role than laid out in charter
8. Steering committee, coordinating committee, and workgroups will require significant coordination, and participants must understand how decisions will be made to avoid confusion
9. If coordination committee only recommends, then who decides?
10. Steering committee decision-making and accountability roles are unclear
11. Clarify limits of Science Panel’s decision making authority.

12. Clarify independent role of sci panel vs PSP staff viz their supporting roles for the monitoring committee.
13. Does the Sci Panel, or the monitoring program, serve as fulcrum for sci/policy interface?
14. Revise Fig. 2 (prog structure) to better reflect role of staff at PSP (fig and text are discrepant)
15. Fig 2 is fairly complex and all contained within PSP structure. Critical for success to show links to decision-making bodies outside PSP.
16. Should emphasize role of PSP in reconciling local and regional focus
17. Clarify role of ECB relative to the monitoring program: links local and region-wide interests
18. Language for applying monitoring info is weak. E.g. ECB is only “informed” and “consulted”
19. Clarify role of the Open Standards process to this program.
20. In Appendix 1, row 1 – clarify who decides who asks questions, vs who decides how to answer the questions, vs who asks for the answers to the questions?
21. There are a few places where the responsible entity may not have the necessary authority

Overall Problem/Purpose/Goals Statements

1. Need to clearly articulate a vision for PS recovery (that goes beyond no net loss) to help guide monitoring and adaptive management efforts
2. Purpose statement not consistent with the intent of the program. Need to clearly articulate the purpose and have the roles and responsibilities reflect that purpose.
3. Goals, structure, functional roles, responsibilities, and funding sources are not easily found or clearly defined in the charter
4. Should articulate the over-arching principles for the program (ref : "Mutual Interests" document)
5. Reference the Sound-wide program in the purpose statement
6. Problem statement should be clear about need for quality data to implement an adaptive mgt prog.
7. Charter should be stated succinctly without reference to adaptive mgt, open stds, & other jargon terms
8. Need more detail in Problem, Purpose, and Goal statements – cite specific PSP mandates, make explicit links to Action Agenda as well as other efforts presumably being done under the auspices of the AA
9. Goals and scope seem vague and inconsistent throughout the document
10. Clarify that monitoring to assess protection actions is critical to success of PSP's mission (reference specific goals of HCPs)
11. Clarify role of salmon recovery monitoring relative to the overarching ecosystem monitoring
12. Clarify if program is intended to address only ecosystem indicators, or also threats/pressures?
13. Expand on problems stemming from current lack of coordination
14. Questions related to scale are not well addressed

Protocols

1. Coordinating committee role should include adopting standard protocols/methods
2. Individual monitoring entities should be given responsibility to use common protocols
3. Clarify when and where standardized protocols are appropriate (what is actually needed?)
4. Develop standardized protocols only when appropriate and implement with great care
5. Do work groups work on protocols?

Add references to Forest Practices Act and CMER where appropriate

Add reference to role of zoos and aquariums

14. Clarify linkage to other past and present coordination efforts, including West Coast Governor's Agreement; Sea Grant state and regional plans; PSAMP, etc.

Elements missing in charter

Communications

1. Need to identify and capitalize on opportunities to inform the public (e.g. on Ferries)
2. Add new sub-goal: facilitate and fund a biennial regional research/monitoring conference (may also reduce need for redundant committees)
3. Set realistic goals for reporting (maybe semi-annual or 5-yr reporting cycles; monthly reports unrealistic)
4. Not the role of the monitoring program to communicate results (albeit they should closely coordinate results with communications)
5. Add detail on how coordinated reporting and synthesizing will occur, emphasizing local input

Incentives

1. Individual contributing entities likely to see only minor benefits from regional collaboration
2. Ensure existing “clients” remain engaged in the regional framework, understand and value their connection to the regional program, and benefit from their participation in the regional program.
3. Clarify how the monitoring and adaptive mgt programs will add value to local and existing organizations by coordinating multiple programs towards a common vision of restoring PS
4. Explain the “hook” for entities/organizations to participate in the program

Funding

1. Funding section is vague and weak
2. Should say the monitoring program is intended to provide better info at reduced cost
3. Crucial that monitoring effort is sustainable, so must be fiscally prudent
4. Need supplemental funding for restoration effectiveness monitoring
5. Use funding strategy and contractual requirements to assure data quality and other needs are met (vs piecing together a system built from purely voluntary contributions).
6. Clarify whether PSP intends to directly fund monitoring activities
7. Only a few committees have the directive to seek funding, but is likely all will be looking for resources

Ambiguities that need to be clarified

Clarify relationship between monitoring objectives and decision-making

1. Clarify (strengthen) relationship between the monitoring program (data) and PSP Action Agenda
2. Unclear what will be monitored and how that relates to dashboard indicators
3. Need to clarify monitoring objectives and tie them to decision making (connect to PSP objectives)
4. Explain how info on dashboard indicators will be interpreted in policy and funding decisions
5. Clarify role of dashboard indicators vs other information used to track recovery
6. Clarify monitoring and assessment of data... not all indicators may be measurable
7. Make sure monitoring design incorporates the questions being asked (S&T vs Effectiveness, etc.)
8. Purpose statement should explicitly articulate objective of monitoring to inform day-to-day management decisions and actions (e.g. swimming beaches, shellfish beds, flood warnings)
9. Explicitly acknowledge monitoring priorities will evolve over time, and the program must be flexible enough to accommodate those shifts
10. Must clearly acknowledge the separate authorities and processes of all organizations currently conducting monitoring (i.e. PSP should help coordinate, but not have responsibility for overseeing all monitoring)
11. Could we say something more general about needing to document QA/QC measures?

Role of individual contributors

1. Explain role of NPDES and other regulatory/compliance monitoring, also agriculture monitoring, K-12, etc.
2. Acknowledge independent authorities and decision making processes (especially related to permit requirements or similar mandates)
3. Clarify that intent is to coordinate multiple independent monitoring programs, not create a single management structure overseeing existing programs conducted under independent and separate authorities.
4. What is the relationship between local programs and regional?
5. Priority of local monitoring should not be compromised or diminished for regional objectives

Data Management

1. A data mgt workgroup seems superfluous (better done by PSP staff coord with steering committee)
2. Data mgt should be a responsibility of each working group
3. Clarify if intent is for the monitoring program to manage, analyze, and synthesize data
4. Develop an integrated data base management system (not specifically suggesting a workgroup)
5. Data mgt section should require implementation of SOPs, DQOs, and QAPPs
6. Set product-focused goals for data management system (focus on priority needs first)
7. Specify vectors and venues for information flow
8. Unclear how data from different entities will be used in the program.
9. Include concept of equal cost of data access

Peer Review

1. "academy" is unclear
2. "the academy" should be changed to "the Steering Committee or an independent entity"
3. Clarify if peer review applies to whole program or individual products. Distinguish different types of review
4. Need peer review focused on the application of monitoring results. Should reference all four things (levels) for which peer review is important
5. Will there be peer review of protocols?
6. Ensure peer review definition is not just referring to reports and publications.

Definitions

1. Concept of Key Ecological Attributes is not used in the document, so why is it defined here?
2. Open Standards is not discussed in the main document
3. Some definitions use the term being defined in the definition itself.
4. Appendix 1 is very helpful and should be referenced in main document. Also should tie roles/responsibilities in Appendix 1 directly to the Action Agenda components.
5. Make sure to explain references to other programs or documents (e.g. performance management system). i.e. how it fits in scale and focus to the monitoring program, and who will be integrating

Not clear how monitoring data gaps will be identified

Work Groups – missing criteria
In general – the list of tasks and topics is too vague
Allow for workgroups to come in different forms and sizes – not all need to be large, complex groups
Peak flows deserve attention
Consider working groups with single topics (e.g. freshwater)
Consider geographic criteria (e.g. San Juan Islands issues vs South Sound)
Addresses or is tied to one of the PSP action items
Indicator used in modeling alternative futures
Know whether workgroup is addressing effectiveness, S&T, implementation, or compliance monitoring
Charter should define the structure/function of workgroups, staffing, mtgs, products, etc.

Work Groups – recommended topics
In general, the recommendations for work groups need more detail, more linkages explained, and more careful review of specific language (substantial line by line comments are offered)
Seems beyond the scope of the Launch Committee to develop such detailed recommendations
Add invasive species workgroup (or seek review of monitoring plans through the invasive spp council)
Salmonids work group needs more discussion since this overlaps a PSP responsibility
Strategic Sci Plan recommends a data mgt workgroup
Add assessment of human well-being/carrying capacity
Stormwater, Marine Water and Sed Quality, Marine shoreline and nearshore habitats, salmon, toxics
<u>Reduce and streamline number of proposed workgroups</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collapse freshwater quality workgroup into existing stormwater workgroup 2. Assign stream flow duties to new Habitats Work Group 3. Combine freshwater, riparian, terrestrial and marine nearshore habitats WG to form a comprehensive Habitats Work Group 4. Birds & Mammals, Marine Food Chain, and Forage Fish WGs should combine into one Species WG 5. Add marine sediment quality to marine water quality WG 6. Move fish tissue toxics from marine food chains and forage fish into marine water quality WG <p>[All of the above results in 7 workgroups: Stormwater, Marine WQ, Salmonids, Habitats, Species, Human Dimensions, and Data Mgt Coord/Access]</p>
<u>5 workgroup topics that should be considered for urgent attention include:</u> stormwater, salmonids, coord of data management and access, nearshore habitats, human dimensions
Incorporate Air Quality: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. routine air quality monitoring -> human dimensions workgroup 2. air deposition -> stormwater workgroup
Include monitoring for ecosystem services in marine, fw, agric, and urban ecosystems

Concerned about potential “stovepiping” within workgroups (e.g. salmonids overlap other workgroups)
Scrap WQI in favor of TMDL parameters; some parameters may be available from long-term datasets and monitoring required under existing programs (e.g. effectiveness of toxic cleanups maybe available from MTCA/Superfund monitoring).
The currently proposed workgroups are not leading critical monitoring tasks which are being addressed by separate groups/processes within PSP (e.g. expanding the indicator list, target setting, integrating monitoring data with the perf management system). These topics need to either become workgroups, or identified as integrative projects among (across) workgroups

Topics needing urgent attention
<u>Governance</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Charter does not address governance issue, esp a 3rd party independent entity option 2. Acknowledge diversity of opinion about the ultimate home of the program; continue facilitating the dialogue on which functions fit best in PSP, workgroups, and through independent review 3. A large group-monitoring effort is unlikely to change things – recommend an independent body 4. Recommend a small, wise group to determine a few measures to monitor and publicize
<u>Start small using existing groups and build as you go</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pilot test regional monitoring program with just a few, already existing groups. Recommend explicitly allowing for flexibility for the framework to develop over time 2. The new regional monitoring program should sustain the value of existing monitoring programs (e.g. locally-driven priorities, clean-ups, compliance monitoring, etc. 3. Build on existing successes incrementally and work to define a more streamlined structure 4. A small number of workgroups is preferable; start with existing groups. 5. Charter provides sufficient foundation for the Steering Committee to begin development of a detailed work plan, recognizing that the process will need to be flexible and adaptable
Conduct an inter-laboratory calibration study focused on marine water quality parameters
Clarify need for stormwater work group to fully implement their strategy (including all land uses)
Consider an RFQQ to learn who (private, public, etc.) could contribute and fill data gaps, and at what cost

Supportive Suggestions
Monitoring program should serve as a “watering hole” of sorts – bringing diverse parties together to inform management with facts
Develop central guiding questions for the monitoring program
Integrate the monitoring program
Develop working conceptual models for each metric (dashboard indicator) to guide monitoring needs
Develop numerical predictive models
Consider extensive and intensive monitoring

Develop a program to resolve scientific uncertainties
Develop a schedule for the adaptive management process
Clarify criteria for high-performance as a monitoring entity (to help orgs reach monitoring goals)

Sources

- Bellevue Utilities: Kit Paulsen
- Coastal Watershed Institute: Anne Shaffer
- Department of Ecology: Josh Baldi
- Department of Natural Resources: Kristin Swendall
- Environmental Protection Agency: Tony Olsen
- Green Crow Corp: Harry Bell
- Invasive Species Council (Recreation and Conservation Office): Wendy Brown
- King County: Joanna Richey
- Pacific Northwest National Laboratory: Ron Thom
- People for Puget Sound: Doug Myers
- Pete Haase, Citizen
- Puget Sound Partnership: Nathalie Hamel
- Navy, Marine Environmental Support Office: Robert Johnston
- Seattle Aquarium: Mark Plunkett
- City of Seattle Public Utilities: Jonathan Frodge and Susan Saffery
- Tulalip Tribes: Kit Rawson
- United States Geological Survey: Rick Dinicola
- University of Washington: Megan Dethier
- Washington Conservation Commission: Carol Smith
- Washington State University: John Stark
- Whidbey Action Area: Bill Blake, Alternate
- WRIA 9: Doug Osterman

Organization Type Breakdown

Action Area	1
Business	2
Citizen	1
City	2
County	1
Federal	3
NGO	3
State	6
Tribe	1
University	1
WRIA	1